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Things You Should Know About...EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

If you are looking for a job, you may consider using an employment service to aid you in your search. Many employment services provide valuable help; however, others misrepresent themselves and their services in an attempt to take your money.

Types of Employment Services

There are many different kinds of employment services, each of which offers job seekers different types of assistance. Some of the most common services are defined below.

Private Personnel Placement Services - These agencies seek to successfully match applicants with prospective employers. Fees for this service are collected only once the applicant has found a job and may be paid entirely by the employer or applicant. In some cases, the employer and applicant may both pay a portion of the fee.

Career Counseling Services - These agencies are designed to help job seekers make career decisions and refine their job search and application skills. Job placement is not guaranteed by these services. Fees are often required in advance and may cost as much as \$4,000.

Job Listing and Advisory Services - These agencies sell information about getting a job in the United States or overseas. This information often includes tips on creating effective resumes and conducting successful job searches. These agencies often require an advance fee.

Public Employment Services - An alternative to private services, public services are available nationwide. Public services provide lists of job openings, employment counseling, screening, and referrals to appropriate educational and training services. Additionally, trained staff provide help with resumes, interviewing techniques, and skills assessment. No fees are required for this public service.

How Do I Choose an Employment Service?

Today, many employment service agencies specialize in placing applicants in certain occupational areas (e.g., lawyers, nurses, editors) or industry types (e.g., advertising, business management, finance).

To find agencies appropriate for your needs, try one or more of the following tactics: check out newspaper ads to see which agencies are associated with the jobs you want; ask friends and business associates for recommendations of agencies they have had success with; or talk to personnel departments in your field to see which agencies they deal with most often.

Must a Service Give Me a Written Contract?

Illinois law requires employment services that charge fees to give you a written contract before they accept any payment from you. The contract must be signed by both you and the service, and must include the following information:

- name, address, and telephone number of the service
- types of jobs you are requesting
- your qualifications and experience
- salary, benefits, and other conditions of employment

- locations you are willing to work
- date the contract expires

How Can I Get a Refund?

If your employment service does not find at least three employment opportunities that meet the specifications set out by your contract within ten calendar days after the contract was signed, the service must refund your entire fee.

What Types of Unfair Practices Does the Law Prohibit?

Law prohibits employment services from:

- publishing false or misleading information about the services they provide;
- circulating information about a job that does not exist;
- recommending a job to you that you are not legally qualified to perform;
- listing a job without permission from the employer; and
- listing a job that would require you to perform any illegal action.

Other contacts:

Federal Trade Commission - www.ftc.gov

Better Business Bureau - www.bbb.org

Office of the Illinois Attorney General

www.ag.state.il.us

Chicago
(800) 386-5438
TTY: (800) 964-3013

Springfield
(800) 243-0618
TTY: (877) 844-5461

Carbondale
(800) 243-0607
TTY: (877) 675-9339

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